



Tsuru Island

Editor: James Card

Kaz Kids go to the Birds

As you know by now the Kaz Kids come to Main City Park on Fridays to help maintain the planting beds along the Spur Trail. What happens when the weather is just too wet and cold for anyone to be out braving the elements.

With every good plan, there is a backup plan. The garden volunteers came to the Resource Center to help the Kaz Kids build BIRD HOUSES. Lunch was provided. We had a fun time working with the students to nail together the precut homes for all those birds out singing in the rain.

The fabricated bird house wood was donated and a bird house for each student was built. They took the houses back to the school. When the weather gets warmer, the students will take them off the shelf and apply a good coat of paint to make them as personal as possible. This procedure allows the students to have yet another opportunity to be constructive and creative. Eventually when painted and dry, the students will take them home and make them available for those birds in need.

During the day, Bill Peterson took a group of students to the garden during a break in the rain to see how the "Interactive Garden Program" would be utilized by the students. Bill learned a lot and has since met with Jenny Halley to confirm a direction that the program will pursue.

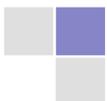
Many thanks to John Harold, Maryann Buck, Sue Hughes and Bill Peterson for coming, helping with lunch and with the students. We only had one complaint about Maryann's cookies...they were way too good to only have one.



Main City Saturdays

A new program called Main City Saturdays was started in January. The purpose is to offer a means for local organizations and companies to participate with the maintenance of Main City Park. January and February are usually the hardest months to have participation in an outdoors program. However, those months were the first to be filled. January included Cub Scouts from Den 586 in Gresham with assistance from the parents and den volunteers. The Scouts were 3rd graders that came out with pleasure regardless of the weather. It gave the Scouts an avenue to earning a badge. Andrea Allen a chaperone leading the group, said they had been looking for an opportunity to volunteer in this capacity. It was a great opportunity for them and the City of Gresham.

The second group that came in February were seniors from Gresham that enjoy volunteering on the Springwater Trail and decided to try this program for a change. This group was led by Curt Kimball. Since they normally work on the Trail, the area around the south entrance to the park would fit their agenda.



Cont. Main City Saturdays

They trimmed the ornamental grasses and trees in the area. In the future Curt and his team will work with the City of Gresham Parks Department working with the Trail.

The park hosted a group put together by Nic Casteneda who participates with the Chamber, the Rotary and the Business Referral Group of Gresham. This group really pulled through on March 25th which was a dry, sunny day, they are also scheduled to return in June.

The Parks Department of Gresham, gave additional tools to add to our program.

At present, there are two groups going at the same time on Saturdays; the Garden maintenance and the Main City Park Saturdays, from 9 to 12.

If you have a company, church organization or a family that would like to put your mark on Main City Park, you can sign up at any time by contacting me at our email, gresham.japanese.gardem@gmail.com or Joe.Walsh@greshamoregon.gov



Tsuru Island Garden Website

The Tsuru Island website is coming right along. Two items that are taking a bit of time are the “Garden in Living Color” and the “History of the Garden”.

The “Garden in Living Color” addition to the website has to do with the color and textures that can be experienced during each month of the year with explanations of the plant changes during the seasons. There will be a clarification of that individual plant for that precise area in the garden. Included are pictures of the plant that draw the visitors interest. Pictures will be added as the plants mature and/or evolve through the seasons and years.

A visitor to the garden or website will realize that the maturing of the plants does not mean that it necessarily changes in height or width. Instead it changes in size of the trunk, stock and branches. In the case of Pines, look for the maturity to include the development of the branching and foliage.

Over the past few weeks we have been working with Matt and Silvie at the Gresham Historical Museum, researching information about Tsuru Island and Main City Park. The information will provide us with the decisions and activities that lead up to the Main City Park, the changes with Johnson Creek, and Tsuru Island. This sets the stage for the development of Tsuru Island Japanese garden and will focus on the volunteer base that helped put it all together. We will continue our research to try and understand the details of the Japanese American Citizen League's goals.

One individual who grew up in Gresham when all these changes took place, was asked if it was an important event in Gresham in the city. He said it was not a big deal. I found the exact opposite during my research. The \$900,000.00 bond changed Powell Blvd, rerouted Johnson Creek and developed Main City Park was a huge undertaking for the City and would change things forever.

Azumaya Repair

Just when you think that you are done with a project and can move on to the next priority in-line, something takes place causing you to take a few steps back. If you recall, someone decided to kick out the decorative lattice on the sides of the Azumaya and take the wood.



We made the decision to build another set of sections. This time it would be made from 2x2 sections of Douglas fir. Materials cost a lot and the gardens' budget would not allow the expense of clear cedar components to match the Azumaya bench that was stolen. A pile of lumber was kept at the storage yard after the old bridge had been disassembled. Some sections of lumber were still good enough to be machined and used for non-structural components. These parts turned out to be prime old growth Douglas fir. Not only is it solid but most of it is clear with no knots, great weather staining in the grain structure and black streaks flowing through the grain where galvanized fasteners were used 46 years ago.

There is a new lattice arrangement for the Azumaya coated with rosewood oil from Brazil. There is also a plan to replace the lattice that surrounds the "moon window" in the center of the back wall. Additional boards have been selected and have been drying in a controlled atmosphere to prevent any additional cracking. The project is set to begin by the end of March by Kent Thompson and Big John. Let Jim know if you are interested in helping with this project.

If you are at the garden/park, look at that pile of wood to see if there is piece you might be interested in for projects or furniture, etc. Notify Jim Card if something appeals to you.



New Trees

Not long ago after the Springwater Trail was completed the beavers decided to remove 2 trees adjacent to the long hand rail between the garden entrance and Main Street Bridge. These trees were replanted with Big Leaf Maples that almost match the ones taken. This tree is common to our area and environment. Another tree placement will be accomplished by the Parks Department who will oversee the planting of 2 white oak trees near the dog park on April 12th at 9am.

The volunteers at Tsuru Island have been asked to provide the bamboo skirts that have been utilized on the island. The hope is to cause enough frustration to the beaver that they will leave the trees alone.

Safe and Sturdy Steps

Some years ago, while working the area behind the "Resource Center" it became apparent that there was no easy way to get from the lower driveway to the upper storage area to the greenhouse. It was a very slippery slope as well. A make-shift set of stairs was added that would at least help one get to the top. The thought never occurred as to how to get back down.

Over the past month of Saturdays, efforts were made by Ron, Steve, Jim Buck, Kent and John Harold to build the new steps. Steve Bruckner submitted information for building the stairs. Staying true to our ongoing endeavors of using recycled materials, some beams left over from one of the trestle of the old bridge were utilized. Using a chain saw, the wood was cut to length and 1/2 inch holes drilled to secure them into the ground with rebar. To bulk up the stability of the stairs, left-over sections of blue stone from the garden path were used. And surplus 3/4 minus crushed rock from the paver project in front of the Resource Center placed between the rocks.

The stairs are finished. With a little dry weather the grading with a shovel, rake and the Dingo will finalize the area. By the way dry weather was just referred to for grading; that is to let you know that most of the project was completed in the pouring down rain during the entire undertaking. Thank you gentlemen!

Distinctive Giboshi

The “Giboshi” or finials on top of each of the four posts of the bridge were used on the original bridge in 1970 and appeared as a totally different configuration and cradled with a highly polished sphere setting on top. The Giboshi on the new bridge was shaped to be as authentic as possible. Tad journeyed to the Portland Japanese Garden and measure the Giboshi that were used there. Scrap sections of Purple Heart were laminated together and Todd Nelson, using a lathe turned them to a high quality ornament.

To provide a bit more detail; Tad felt that the Giboshi should be larger in diameter due to the post size of 9-inches. It will have a more aesthetics appearance. Although that did not make a difference at the Portland Garden (their Giboshi was smaller than the post).

As some time and weather exposure along with the glue breaking down started to reduce the appearance of these pieces, a repair with epoxy took place. A decision needed to be made to either have new bronze units cast at a cost of \$2100.00 or make new Giboshi out of solid sections of Purple Heart.

Visiting Phil at Moxon Hardwoods revealed that he had a section of Purple Heart that was 8x12 inches and 16 feet long and had not been exposed to the outside for over 10 years. A 5 ft. board weighting 250 lbs. was hauled to the shop. It refused to slide out of the truck. After using some pipe as rollers, a hand truck, and a chain saw, each section was cut to about 40lbs. Jim Buck will be fabricating the new Giboshi in his garage/shop using a small lathe. Each piece is 13” tall and 8” in diameter at the base.

It was discovered that the sections were just too far out of balance to allow the lathe to hold them and not bounce around. Doug Mullins at Quality Woodworking referred us to Mike Ash a resident and volunteer of the City Of Gresham who provided a few turns on his larger lathe to balance the pieces. Within one afternoon the project was ready to move forward. All four units needed to be the same and installed onto the posts and finished with the best possible polish for durability.

In doing research, we found that the Giboshi was borrowed from the use of roof line decoration with some hint of superstition...my dog will scare your dog spirit. There are a few companies that specialize in these pieces that are used as art forms on building, stair railings and bridges. Giboshi are usually made of brass or bronze and are usually black in color, while many in Japan are weathered to a Verde color. Anything made of metal placed in the garden might not stay on the bridge without an armed guard 24/7. That block of Purple Heart cost less than \$325.00.



Wood production for the new bench. And Giboshi for the bridge posts

KAZ KIDS WORK SCHEDULE

APRIL 21

MAY 19

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Send Questions and/or Comments to:

gresham.japanese.garden@gmail.com

